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SYNOPSIS

OF THE

MILITARY CAREER

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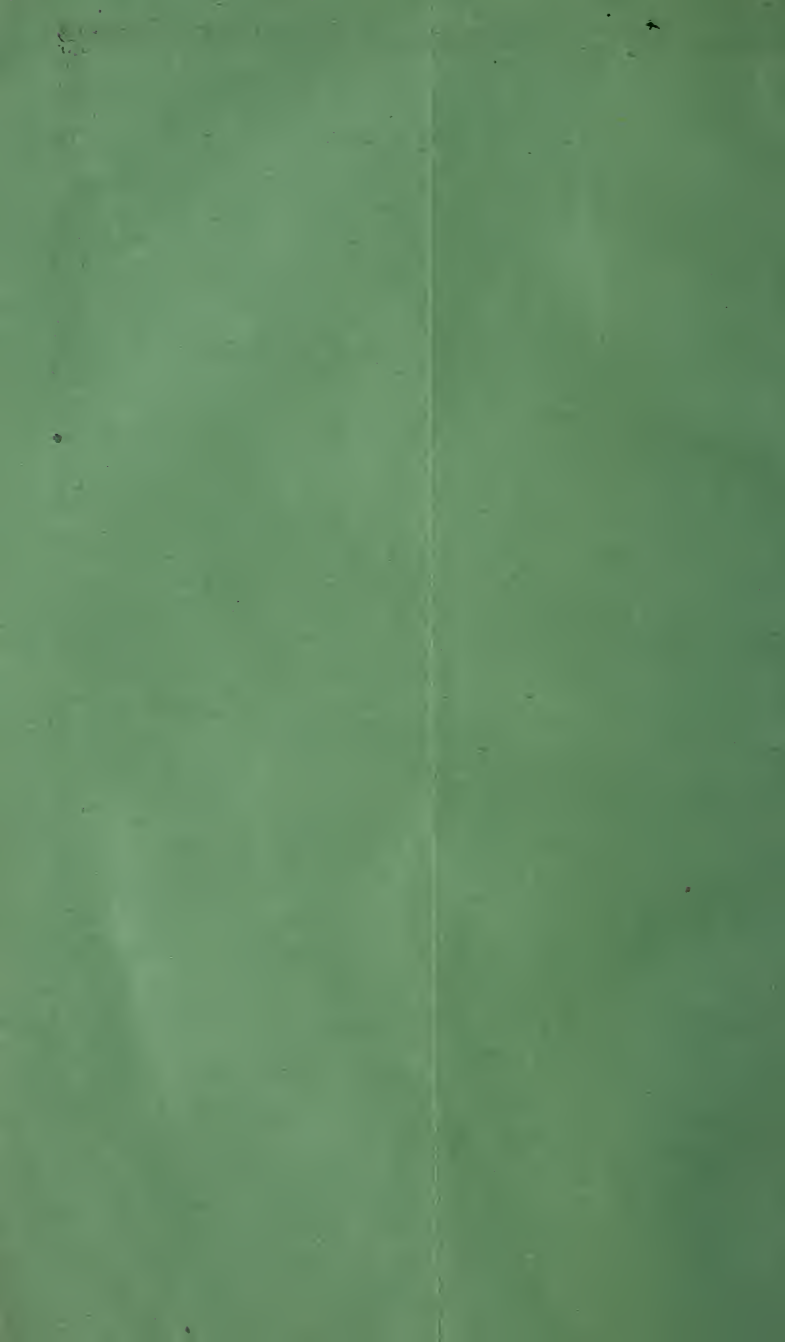
GEN. JOSEPH WHEELER,

COMMANDER OF THE CAVALRY CORPS,

ARMY OF THE WEST.

NEW YORK :

1865.





GENERAL WHEELER,

COMMANDER OF THE CAVALRY CORPS, ARMY OF THE WEST.

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SYNOPSIS

OF

GENERAL WHEELER'S MILITARY CAREER.

TAKEN FROM OFFICIAL REPORTS.

BY A STAFF OFFICER.

GENERAL JOSEPH WHEELER,

Second son of Joseph Wheeler, one of the oldest citizens of Augusta, Georgia, was born in that city on the 10th of September, 1836. His youth was spent in the first schools of the country, and gave evidence of the great genius which, at so early an age of his manhood was destined to shine forth and give him a commanding position in his country's history. Early in life he chose the profession of arms, despite the wishes and instructions of a good father and mother.

He was appointed to West Point in 1854, and was the first that graduated under the five year rule. His career there developed the fact that he was one of the few who are born for the profession of arms. While others were passing their leisure moments in sport and reading the romances of the day, young Wheeler could be found in the library, poring, with the deepest interest, over those volumes which spoke of campaigns and battles, both ancient and modern, and examining military maps and plans of battle of distinguished generals. His classmates all speak of this peculiar trait of his character; and so dilligently did he apply himself to this study, and that of the organization and administration of armies, and so familiar did he become with these subjects, that they regarded his decision as final upon any disputed point.

In October 1859, he was ordered to the cavalry school at Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and there remained on duty during the winter. In the spring of 1860, we find him in New Mexico, stationed, respectively at Forts Union, Craig, and Filmore, and engaging in several

important scouts against the hostile Indians. Early in March, 1861, seeing the storm-cloud gathering over his country, he at once decided his course, and when his native State seceded, forwarded his resignation and returned to Georgia. On his arrival, he was commissioned 1st Lieutenant of artillery, in the regular army, and assigned to duty at Pensacola, Florida. Here he labored, as only the true soldier will, and manifested, not only untiring energy and zeal, but a capacity far beyond his years, receiving the special commendation of his commander, General Bragg. The attention of the President having been called to the worth of so excellent an officer, he commissioned him COLONEL, and assigned him to the command of the 19th Alabama Infantry Regiment. Here was a wider sphere, and he entered upon it with the vigor of a superior mind.

BATTLE OF SHILOH.

When the great BEAUREGARD began to collect his army at CORINTH, Mississippi, Col. Wheeler's regiment was among the first to arrive at that point. By constant drill and discipline, he soon made it a regiment of the very first order. During the battle of Shiloh, his regiment was in the foremost rank, and right bravely did Col. Wheeler manœuvre it throughout the brilliant engagement. He was always found with his regiment in the thickest of the fight, urging his brave troops upon the serried ranks of the enemy, several times leading in successful charges, bearing his regimental colors in his own hands. He was highly complimented on the field by many of the most distinguished generals, who bore brave parts in that memorable struggle. General Withers, his Division commander, in his official report, speaking of the withdrawal of our troops from the field, testifies to his valor and skill in the following words. "The remainder of the troops were left under command of Col. Wheeler, who, throughout the fight, had proved himself worthy of all trust and confidence,—a gallant commander and an accomplished soldier." The official report of Brig. General James R. Chalmers, who commanded a brigade, in the same division, in recounting the operations of the second day, thus refers to him—"Colonel Wheeler, of the 19th Alabama Regiment was, with a small remnant of the regiment, at this time, fighting with the small remnant of Mississippians, and bearing the colors of his command in this last charge so gallantly made. He had two horses shot under him, and so conspicuous was his gallantry, he was recommended by his commanding general for promotion to brigadier general.

In the many conflicts, including the fight at Farmington, by which the advance of the powerful force of the enemy upon Corinth was contested, the brigade which he commanded, bore a prominent part. Upon the evacuation of Corinth, General Beauregard directed that the best brigade of the army should be selected as the rear-guard. The brigade commanded by Col. Wheeler, was chosen, and the numerous engagements with, and charges made upon the pursuing enemy, at Bridge Creek and other points, tell how well he executed so responsible a trust.

RAID IN WEST TENNESSEE.

In the latter part of July, he was placed in command of the cavalry of the army of Mississippi, which had been idle, and had worn away, for want of care, to a mere squad. In four days after taking command, he had penetrated the enemy's lines, and was destroying bridges on the line of communication near Bolivar and Jackson, Tennessee. He also, during this time, had several successful fights with the enemy's cavalry, capturing a small train, with a number of horses and mules. He also burned three thousand (3,000) bales of cotton, which had been purchased by the enemy. A large force, not less than twenty times that of his own, was sent to capture him, but he eluded his pursuers and brought his command out in safety. From this period, the true genius of the young soldier began to expand and show itself, and soon it became manifest that the cavalry was to shine forth and aid our cause in a manner never before conceived of by our military men.

KENTUCKY CAMPAIGN—BATTLE OF PERRYVILLE.

Upon the march of our army into Kentucky, Col. Wheeler struck many a well aimed blow at the flanks of the enemy, as he rapidly retreated to the Ohio river. His gallantry and the brilliancy of his charges at Mumfordsville, elicited the admiration and compliments of the enemy. During the battle of Perryville, he handled his brigade with the most consummate ability, keeping back, during the day, by his stubborn resistance, an entire corps of the enemy. As the enemy formed his lines upon the hills west of Perryville, with the evident purpose of turning our left flank, Col. Wheeler charged them again and again, at the head of his brigade, and put them to rout. Nothing could exceed the heroic bearing of this officer upon that brilliant field.

General Polk, in his *official report*, commends his gallantry for leading a charge in which a battery and a number of prisoners were taken.

RETREAT FROM KENTUCKY.

When the commanding general determined to leave Kentucky, he appointed Col. Wheeler, chief of cavalry, and entrusted to him the work of covering the retreat, which will, when the history of this revolution is recorded, rank second to none in the able manner in which it was conducted. Although this responsibility was of a magnitude sufficient to appall many an older soldier, this gallant and intrepid soldier meets it and distinguishes himself in many a brilliant engagement. From Danville to Loudon, the blush of the grey dawn and the shades of night alike bear noble testimony of the able manner in which the enemys exultant columns were met and handsomely repulsed. His soldiers soon learned, from his always being in front and ever watchful at night, that their labor was not only one of great importance, but about to reflect honor alike upon officer

and soldier. During this retreat, his effective force did not exceed, at any time, one thousand men, but so ingeniously did he dispose it, that he protected every approach to our army, and forced the enemy to advance in long lines of battle, under the impression that a large infantry force was in his front. Thus was his advance restricted to six or seven miles per day. Numerous attempts were made by the enemy to turn his position in order to strike at the flanks of our army and capture our wagon trains. These Colonel Wheeler had anticipated, and his ever watchful care frustrated all their plans. Each night he acquainted himself thoroughly with the nature of the country over which he was to fight on the succeeding day, which accounts, in a great measure, for his uniform success. The weary and foot-sore victors of the bloody field of Perryville, after the march of the day, would bivouac in quiet upon the beautiful streams of Eastern Kentucky, saying, "Wheeler and his trusty boys are guarding us." So successfully was the retreat covered by the cavalry, that in no instance was an infantry soldier ever called upon to fire his musket. *General Buell*, who was severely censured and relieved from the command of his army, for allowing General Bragg to escape from Kentucky, stated, officially, that General Bragg's rear was covered by cavalry, handled with more skill than had ever been known under similar circumstances. Col. Wheeler, during this campaign, met the enemy in no less than thirty successful fights, besides innumerable skirmishes.

BATTLES AROUND NASHVILLE, AND BATTLE OF MURFREESBORO.

After this campaign, upon the combined recommendation of Gen. Bragg, Polk, Hardee and Buckner, he was commissioned *Brigadier General*, and immediately sent to middle Tennessee. On his arrival, he was stationed at Lavergne, fifteen miles in front of our army. From here he sallied forth almost daily, frequently capturing foraging parties, with their trains, from Nashville, and kept his pickets in view of the spires of that city. In one of these engagements his horse was torn in pieces by a cannon ball, his aid killed at his side, and he himself painfully wounded by the fragment of a shell. Notwithstanding the intense pain from which he was suffering, he procured another horse, and remained on the field until he had driven the enemy away. The Yankee author of Gen. Rosecrans' "Campaigns of the army of the Cumberland," in speaking of their difficulties in obtaining forage, states that "not a *nubbin* of corn was obtained without fighting for it," and in excusing their disasters in these fights, says Gen. Wheeler, "the rebel commander encouraged his troops, by both voice and example." During the two months he was engaged in twenty distinct fights, besides many skirmishes, at all times exhibiting so dauntless a spirit that the soldiers of his command gave him the soubriquet of the "*Little Hero*." On the morning of the 26th of December, 1862, Rosecrans commenced his advance, which resulted in adding fresh laurels to the brow of this gallant general. For four successive days, Gen. Wheeler manœvered his command so as to hold the enemy in check until our army

was prepared to grapple with him upon the Banks of Stone River. When General Bragg was ready to receive the enemy, General Wheeler quietly withdrew within the infantry lines at nightfall, not to rest, but to commence work anew. After a few hours rest to his worn horses and men, "to horse," was again sounded; and in the dark, bleak night, he pressed forward with about eleven hundred men, and gained the enemy's rear. At daylight on the morning of the 30th, he encountered a large supply train near Jeffersville, with a brigade of infantry in front of it. With a portion of the command, he charged the brigade, drove it away, while the remainder of his force destroyed and drove off the wagons and mules, and secured the stores. Not content, however, to hover merely on the flanks of the enemy, he presses on, until his immediate rear is reached, when train after train loaded with the most valuable supplies was destroyed or brought off. To an eye witness, nothing could have been more thrilling or exciting, than the manœvering of this command, charging in three separate columns, firing as they charged and completely terrifying the guards, as by detachments of hundreds they are encountered and captured. The scene at Lavergne was unusually thrilling. There, amid the clatter of innumerable hoofs, and the braying of thousands of captured mules, a single glance could take in the surrender of hundreds of prisoners, and the smoke and blaze of immense depots of stores, and nearly a thousand wagons. Gen. Wheeler does not stop here, but speeds away to Rock Spring and Nolensville, at each of which places he encounters the trains of the enemy's *right wing*, which meet with the fate of those upon the *left* and *center*. At night he camped his weary horsemen beneath the light of the enemy's camp fires, and on the following day joins in the fierce carnage of the battle of the 31st of December, 1862. He charges again and again upon the enemy's long lines, disconcerting all of Gen. Rosecrans' plans of battle, and causing him to detach a large force from the front of his army. He makes even another circuit of their army, destroying an immense quantity of supplies and valuable trains. He had well nigh completed the third circuit, when he was recalled to cover the retreat of our army. In this he was eminently successful, having held the enemy in check in sight of Murfreesboro for five days. Those who witnessed all the circumstances preceding and during the battle of Murfreesboro, pronounce his skill and endurance as surpassing anything before known in cavalry. He did not sleep exceeding five hours during the whole of five days, and was in the saddle eighteen hours out of every twenty-four during that time, now directing a scout, now posting a picket, and then dashing like a phantom on some unsuspecting body of the enemy.

General Bragg, in his official report of the battle of Murfreesboro, states: "To the skillful manner in which the cavalry thus ably supported, was handled, and the exceeding gallantry of its officers and men, must be attributed the four day's time engaged by the enemy in reaching the battle field, a distance of only twenty miles from his encampments, over fine McAdamized roads. On Monday night, Gen. Wheeler, proceeded, as ordered, to gain the enemy's rear. By Tuesday morning, moving on the Jefferson Pike,

around the enemy's flank, he had gained the rear of their whole army, and soon attacked the trains, their guards and the numerous stragglers. He succeeded in capturing hundreds of prisoners, and destroying hundreds of wagons, loaded with supplies and baggage. After clearing the road, he made his entire circuit and joined the cavalry on our left." General Bragg makes mention, also, of Gen. Wheeler's two other successful movements to the enemy's rear, by which he captured more trains and many prisoners. In closing his *report*, he states that "General Wheeler was pre-eminently distinguished throughout the action, as well as for a month previous, in many successful conflicts with the enemy—and he ascribes to his gallant lead, and that of his officers, the just enhancement of the reputation of our cavalry."

DESTRUCTION OF GUNBOATS, STORES, &c.

After the battle, Generals Wheeler, Forrest, and Morgan were each ordered to work upon the enemy's lines of communication. General Morgan, having just returned from Kentucky, was unable to go, and General Forrest's command was too much worn to attempt anything immediately. General Wheeler, although his command had been fighting almost hourly for a fortnight, collected about six hundred men, and amid the beating snow and ice, commenced the march. In a short time he was swooping like an eagle after his prey, upon the enemy's railroads, and the rivers plowed by his magnificent steamers. A locomotive and train of cars are first destroyed on the Nashville and Chattanooga railroad, and the bridge over Mill Creek cut away and burned. There nine large transports, laden with rich supplies, each guarded by a strong infantry force, and conveyed by a fleet of gunboats, bound for the "Army of the Cumberland," meet his eagle eye. He boldly attacks and captures the transports, and soon they lie in blackened hulks along the shore. Few, but those who have witnessed a similar scene, can appreciate the grandeur of a fleet of "iron-clads," as they plow their way defiantly, belching forth, at each revolution of their wheels, shot and shell from their iron-sides. So steamed the "Siddell." "Steady, men, steady, she is ours," is shouted forth by the hero, and soon the welkin rang with shouts as our handful of horsemen see the "Stars and Stripes" lowered to her deck, and the commanding officer surrenders his sword, his crew, her armament of heavy guns, small arms and valuable supplies of ammunition. Alongside the blazing and crackling transports, she becomes a cinder upon the waters, which only an hour before she had walked so proudly—"like a thing of life."

No less than twenty other steamboats, which were aground on Harpeth Shoals and guarded by gunboats, took fright, disgorged their valuable cargoes of army supplies into the muddy Cumberland, and steamed for safer quarters and deeper water. At Ashland, on the north bank of the river, the enemy had collected immense supplies of subsistence for his entire army. Although the waters of the Cumberland, much swollen by recent rains intervened, he swam his

dauntless cavaliers over, drove away the guards, composed of a regiment of infantry, and destroyed stores covering several acres of ground. After this, having been joined by the command of General Forrest, every force of the enemy on the river was driven into the forts at Dover, closely pursued by our cavalry, who succeeded in capturing a fine battery of brass rifled guns, a number of small arms, ammunition, a small train of wagons, horses and mules, together with one hundred prisoners. The garrison was only saved by the arrival of a fleet of transports bringing General Granger's division of infantry as reinforcements. The whole number of prisoners taken up at this time, on this expedition, was four hundred and fifty. The amount and value of the stores destroyed at Ashland on the transports and in the wagon trains, during the battle of Murfreesboro was immense, so great indeed, that it is generally conceded it was the main cause which delayed the second advance of the enemy for the space of six months.

Pursuant to orders from army headquarters, he returned to the army, not, however, without striking a blow on his return march, by which he captured and destroyed a large locomotive and long train of cars, on which were taken one hundred and fifty prisoners more. Before reaching the army he received a telegram from the PRESIDENT, announcing his promotion to Major General. Congress passed a resolution of thanks to General Wheeler for his daring conduct and brilliant achievements.

FIGHT AT SHELBYVILLE—COVERS RETREAT FROM TENNESSEE.

During the next four months we find this *favoured child of Mars*, with his command, occupied in picketing close up to the enemy's main army, covering a front of seventy miles, and engaged in protecting trains of supplies for our army, from the enemy's rear and from Kentucky. During this whole time not so much as one wagon was lost. Whenever any part of his command could be spared from the front of the army, he would make rapid incursions into the lines of the enemy. On one of these, a short time prior to the retreat from Middle Tennessee, he succeeded in capturing two immense and valuable railroad trains on the same day. One on the Louisville and Nashville railroad, and the other on the Nashville and Murfreesboro railroad. With one of these he captured a large number of officers, including two colonels. Again this *heroic soldier* is called upon to cover the retreat of our army, as it leaves the fertile lands of that most hospitable and patriotic people of Middle Tennessee, and seeks the line of the Tennessee river, at Chattanooga, during which occurred the desperate encounter at Shelbyville. Although his character for the most dashing bravery and the amiable traits of the good officer, had shone forth upon many a well-contested field, and in his intercourse with all those who came near him, with a full lustre—yet it remained for this occasion to show to his generals, officers and soldiers, not only that the soul of the patriot beat in every movement he made, but that his generosity and nobleness of character could only seek the good of his country and people, despising self-

aggrandisement. He had been left at Shelbyville to dispose the cavalry, so as to cover the movement of the army to Tullahoma. Gen. Martin, with one thousand men, arrived at Shelbyville, after a severe march of fifty miles in a drenching rain, which had damaged his ammunition and most of his guns had become too wet to be fired. On the approach of the enemy from Murfreesboro, with 12,000 cavalry, supported by infantry, under Generals Stanley and Granger, of which movement General Wheeler was fully advised. General Martin moved out and took position at the breastworks. Gen. Wheeler soon joined him, but only in time to hear that two hundred of Martin's men, stationed about one mile to his left, had been run over and captured by a large force of the enemy. He then ordered the withdrawal of the forces to the town, which he determined to hold, notwithstanding the condition of his guns and ammunition, as above stated, until the arrival of General Forrest, who was momentarily expected.

Gen. Wheeler formed his command in front of the Court House, and fought them warmly. Finally a column was seen moving rapidly down the road upon which Forrest was expected. Suddenly, as the column drew near, it was discovered they were Federals instead of friends. Three other heavy columns were pressing upon him. One of them had charged a portion of his forces, and driven them over the Tullahoma Bridge. Finding himself so completely surrounded, this gallant officer started the remainder of his command out of town, and remained with his escort, and checked one column which threatened their destruction. Charge after charge is made, and his sabre flashed over the head of many an invader. When entirely surrounded, he charged through a column which held his line of retreat, and might have himself retired without further danger. He then saw that a portion of his forces had been cut off, and the enemy held the bridge over Duck River, which, if permitted, without further resistance, would have enabled them to have pursued and overtaken the army trains. Regardless of his own life, he quickly gathered some fifty or sixty brave spirits, and like a brave "Navarre," hurled himself upon the enemy's flanks, driving them back into the town in utter confusion, opening the road for the escape of his command, and placing the wagon train out of danger. The enemy rallied, when he was charged again and again, but the *Young Murat* met them with volleys of pistol shots and the clatter of sabres, and repulsed them. The boldness and gallantry displayed in these charges have not been surpassed in the history of this Revolution, and counterbalanced the paucity of numbers. It was now sundown; everything was across Duck River in security, and he was about to make still another charge, when a staff officer caught him, and pointed to his rear, where the enemy had again surrounded him. With another column, wheeling quickly, he charged through it, and plunged headlong into the river, then swollen to a mighty torrent, and amid a shower of bullets, making the water fairly foam, he clambered up the opposite bank. Of the sixty who formed this "forlorn hope," but thirteen escaped, and three of these were badly wounded. His first thought, after crossing the river, was to send to Gen. Forrest, by a circuitous route,

and explain how he could move out in safety. It afterwards proved that General Forrest never came nearer Shelbyville than the breastworks, from which place he sent in a scout and awaited its return. On hearing that the enemy were fighting General Martin's command, and thinking he could be of no service, he turned back and crossed the river some miles below town. Gen. Wheeler was dressed in full uniform, and citizens and prisoners taken early in the fight so described him that the enemy easily recognized him, and called to their men to catch him. They afterwards told the citizens of Shelbyville that they "had whipped him that day, but that he was the bravest man in the world." It was a poor triumph to attain so small a result, after fighting for four hours, twelve thousand against six hundred. But for the desperate resistance they met, many of our trains would have been lost. The Shelbyville troops, having obtained fresh supplies of ammunition, fully revenged themselves in the many brilliant and successful fights in which General Wheeler engaged the enemy in front of Tullahoma, at Allisonia Bridge, New Church, Elk River Bridge, University Place, and many others, during that hazardous but fortunate retreat.

FRUSTRATED RAID IN ALABAMA.

After our army had reached Chattanooga, the enemy started a large cavalry raid into Alabama. Gen. Wheeler frustrated this raid by meeting it at the Tennessee River. After many vain attempts to effect a crossing, the enemy was compelled to abandon the expedition.

BATTLE OF CHICKAMAUGA.

When our army retired from Chattanooga to engage the vandal hosts in the great victory of Chickamauga, General Wheeler's command guarded all the passes of the mountains and was successful, after severe fighting, in checking Rosecrans' right wing, which was endeavoring to penetrate to Rome. He, with his command, bore a prominent part on the battle field of Chickamauga, being hotly engaged during both days of the battle, as well for several days preceding and succeeding that eventful day, making frequent charges upon the enemy's lines with the most telling effect. During the 19th and 20th of September, he captured about 2,000 prisoners, a large train of wagons and ambulances, large supplies of medical stores, and other valuable property. On the morning of the 21st he moved with a portion of his forces into Chattanooga Valley, behind the enemy's right flank, and soon found two columns of cavalry moving upon him. Before these columns could unite, he vigorously attacked one and drove it back towards Chattanooga. Leaving his escort and a regiment to hold that column in check, he moved with the remainder of his force, then reduced to scarcely a thousand men, upon the other column, which proved to be a brigade of five regiments of cavalry, numbering not less than 2,000 men, guarding a large and rich train of wagons. He skilfully disposed his troops, and placing

himself at the head of his command, charged with such vigor that their lines were broken, and the whole mass swept down the valley. Away they went, and our gallant cavalier in hot pursuit, keeping up a running fight for seven miles, killing and wounding large numbers. Four hundred and fifty prisoners were captured, and the remainder of the command completely routed and dispersed, many of whom were picked up on the following day. The entire train of wagons fell into his hands, and the Yankee commander escaped with only about seventy-five men, half of whom were dismounted. During this, and the previous day's fighting, 18 stands of colors were captured by Gen. Wheeler. The next morning he warmly engaged the enemy, and drove him into Chattanooga, and the following day, being ordered to drive him from Lookout Mountain, he made a night assault upon the enemy's fortifications, driving him off the precipitous edge of Point Lookout, capturing a considerable amount of equipage and clothing.

RAID IN TENNESSEE—GREAT SUCCESS.

This work accomplished, this energetic and indefatigable soldier was ordered to cross the Tennessee River, and, if possible, make the circuit of Gen. Rosecrans' army. So worn and jaded were his men and horses that his subordinate commanders gave it as their opinion that it was impracticable to execute the order. The commanders of three brigades entered solemn protests against their commands being further called upon in their unserviceable and worn condition. Cavalry officers of extended experience asserted that half of the command would be lost from inability to travel, and even predicted the entire command would be sacrificed. In the face of these discouraging statements and predictions, this *young soldier* knew nothing but obedience to his orders, and the bugle notes to "march" were sounded, and by a skilful *ruse-de-guerre*, he boldly crossed the Tennessee River at Cotton Port, in the face of an enemy whose strength was fully equal to his own, warmly assailed the enemy, and drove him towards the Cumberland mountains, capturing nearly a hundred prisoners. At dusk the column was put in motion towards Waldron's Ridge, in a drenching storm. About 10 o'clock, General Wheeler being in advance with his staff and escort, encountered in the extreme darkness of the night a regiment of cavalry, which he charged, driving them into the most perfect confusion, wounding a few of the enemy, and capturing ten prisoners. With great difficulty the command marched up the mountain, and next day reached Sequatchie Valley. By this time the horses were exceedingly worn. He selected about 1,300 of the best mounted men, and took the saddle at 2 A. M. on the 2nd of October, to scour the valley in search of his prey, while the remainder of the command was ordered to march slowly over Cumberland mountain towards McMinnville. Three hundred of the men he started with were necessarily detailed to guard his rear and flanks. After marching six miles with his escort and advance guard, he captured 32 wagons, 200 mules and horses, and a number of prisoners. These

were taken in charge by the 4th Ala. Reg't Cav., and with the remainder of his command, now less than 1,000 men, he pressed down the valley. As jocund day began to stand tip-toe on the mountain tops on either side, and the sunbeams to cast their golden radiance upon the fields of that fertile valley, as if to cheer the weary soldier for the brilliant achievements before him, a column of the enemy was encountered, and no sooner seen than the notes of the General's bugle sounded the charge, and each horseman, instinct with new life, rushed forward and dislodged the enemy from each position which he endeavored to hold. On arriving at Anderson's \times Roads, upon the level valley as far as the eye could reach, and all the way up the mountains, nothing but the white tops of the immense wagon trains could be seen. This train was guarded by a brigade of cavalry in front, one in rear, and a brigade of infantry supported by cavalry was directly opposed to him. For nearly two hours the enemy resisted stubbornly, but by attacking each column with vigor in detail, before they had time to concentrate, he succeeded in routing them—thus capturing the entire train, with more than a thousand prisoners. Eight hours were now consumed in selecting and sending to the rear such articles—mules, wagons, &c.—as could be carried off, in thoroughly destroying the remainder of the wagons, and sabering or shooting down thousands of mules that were not needed. No accurate estimate of the number of wagons and value of the property captured could be made, as no one person saw the entire train. The Yankee quartermaster in charge showed by his papers that it numbered 800—six mule Government wagons, loaded with all kinds of quartermaster, commissary, ordnance and medical stores, besides which there were a large number of sutlers' wagons, and other private vehicles of all kinds—probably in all about 1000 wagons. Many citizens who saw the trains estimated their number at between 2000 and 3000 wagons. Some of the enemy's newspapers have represented it as the richest train captured during the war, and inflicting the heaviest loss of property ever sustained by them. While withdrawing, he was attacked by an overwhelming force from two directions, which he resisted as he fell back, until dark, inflicting upon his pursuers a heavy loss. By 10 A. M. the next day he had traveled forty miles, and was leading the column which had passed directly over Cumberland mountains, in an attack upon the fortifications at McMinnville. After a short fight the works were carried, and an immense depot of supplies, including quartermaster and ordnance stores, 250 horses, a train of wagons, twelve stores well stocked with all kinds of goods, and 587 prisoners, fell into our hands. A large locomotive and train of cars were also captured by Gen. Wheeler while they were endeavoring to escape. The remainder of the day and night was spent in destroying all property which was not appropriated by the command. The immense bridges over Hurricane Creek and Collins River were also thoroughly destroyed.

From McMinnville he moved towards the Nashville railroad. The enemy at Murfreesboro having been strongly reinforced, he deemed it unwise to attack them in their fortifications. After capturing a strong stockade, with its garrison, in the suburbs, destroying the

large railroad bridge over Stone River, and tearing up several miles of the track, he moved down the railroad to War Trace, capturing two trains with supplies at Christiana and Fostersville, tearing up many miles of the track, burning all the railroad bridges, including the large ones near and just below War Trace and over Duck River, and capturing the stockades, with the garrisons. Thence he marched on Shelbyville, where he captured and destroyed a large quantity of stores, the garrison having beat a hasty retreat the night previous. The garrison of Columbia also retreated rapidly toward Nashville, after destroying their stores.

The designs of the expedition having been accomplished with far greater success than the expectations of the most sanguine. Gen. Wheeler commenced his return march towards the Tennessee River. Rosecrans' entire cavalry force, not less than 13,000 men, had been warmly fighting him in rear and on the flanks for four days, being continually repulsed with great loss by our brave troops. They now advanced rapidly, after being reinforced by a division of infantry, to attack him. A portion of the command having taken a road different from what they were ordered, were attacked when isolated under disadvantageous circumstances. To correct this error, Gen. Wheeler hastens with his available troops, numbering about 1000 men, to their assistance, on the Lewisburg Pike, and places this body of men in position to check the enemy's advance, until the balance of his command and the wagons could be got out of danger. The enemy advanced in a bold front, and our brave troops met them with grape, cannister, and the roar of their trusty rifles, and repulsed each and every charge which was made by the enemy. So stunning was the blow that the enemy received on that occasion, that he advanced no further during the day, and was content to retire and be permitted to bury his dead and care for his wounded. The loss of the enemy in this fight, as shown by their own reports, was more than four times that of our own. Gen. Wheeler continued his withdrawal to the Tennessee River, and crossed it at Muscle Shoals, the enemy appearing at the northern bank as he reached the southern. When the worn condition of his command, which had for forty successive days previous been engaged with the enemy, the large concentration of forces which he was compelled to fight almost continually in front, flanks and rear, his exceedingly small losses compared with those of the enemy, the vast amount of valuable property and rich stores destroyed, and the great damage done to the railroad, is taken in consideration, this can but be considered by far the most brilliant and successful raid of the war.

CAMPAIGN IN EAST TENNESSEE.

With but little rest, he was ordered into East Tennessee, to cooperate with Gen. Longstreet. By that gallant soldier he was ordered to press towards Knoxville, to create such a diversion as would hide his own movements near Loudon. General Wheeler pushed boldly over the Tennessee River, made a night's march, and attacked and captured a Federal cavalry regiment at Marysville.

Just as the regiment surrendered, Col. Woolford, with his brigade of cavalry, crossed Little River, to come to the relief of the party at Marysville. Gen. Wheeler charged and drove him over the river in confusion, capturing one hundred and ten prisoners, besides killing and wounding large numbers. The following morning Gen. Wheeler pushed over Little River and attacked Sander's, Shackelford's, Woolford's and Penderbicker's brigades of cavalry, all being under Gen. Sanders. After a short fight they were driven two miles, when, with a battery to assist them, they made a stand in a strong position beyond a creek which could not be crossed by horses, the enemy having destroyed the bridge. Gen. Wheeler dismounted half his force, dislodged the enemy, rebuilt the bridge, and charged the enemy mounted, routing their great reserves, and sweeping them on towards Knoxville. The charge was continued, and the enemy driven pell-mell towards the city. One hundred and fifty prisoners are captured, a portion of the flying troopers hurl themselves into the river, and attempt to gain the other bank; a portion go at lightning speed over the pontoons, rushing into the city, creating the greatest consternation; a portion escaped by scattering in all directions, and the ground for three miles is strewn with their dead and wounded. General Sanders, the Yankee commander, was mortally wounded, and died two days later. Thus Burnside's cavalry, which was the boast of the "Army of the Ohio," was in two days thoroughly beaten, captured, killed, scattered or demoralized, by an inferior force under the gallant Wheeler, whose loss in the entire affair was but trifling. Citizens who were in Knoxville at the time state that nothing could be more complete than the rout and affright of this panic-stricken body of cavalry, as they rushed into the city, creating the wildest confusion—during which *Brownlow* and *Maynard* packed up and started for the North. Many of these vandals were drowned in attempting to swim the river. The enemy's works being too strong for him to attack, he moved, in obedience to orders, to join Gen. Longstreet on the other side of the river, and assisted in investing Knoxville. While here, he succeeded in capturing a number of wagons, a large drove of hogs, and much other valuable property. For the next eight days he was engaged in the siege of Knoxville, continually engaging the enemy. At this time General Grant was making preparations to attack our army in front of Chattanooga. Gen. Bragg telegraphed for Gen. Wheeler to join him. He starts immediately, travels day and night, and reaches the army just in time to cover the retreat from Missionary Ridge. This he did in his usual able manner. On the third day Gen. Cleburne was ordered to remain in the rear, and fought the enemy at Ringold, Ga., Gen. Wheeler disposing his cavalry on his flanks. During this engagement Gen. Wheeler's hat was struck by a Minie ball, and his foot contused by the fragments of a shell.

From November, 1863, until May, 1864, all but two brigades of Wheeler's command was detached on duty in East Tennessee, or foraging in Alabama. On December 27th, 1863, Wheeler was sent with one thousand men, to endeavor to overtake a train of wagons, which was heavily guarded, and en route to Knoxville, from Chattanooga. By travelling all night, the train was overtaken by day-

light just as it was crossing the Hiawasse bridge, near Charleston. They charged the enemy's rear, captured twenty prisoners, and a portion of the train. The prisoners were brought off, but the train had to be abandoned, as it was covered by the fire from the heavy forts near the crossing. A considerable number of the enemy were killed and wounded, while our loss was trifling. After engaging the enemy for some time, Gen. Wheeler ordered his troops to be withdrawn. While this was being accomplished the enemy made a general charge upon our rear guard. Gen. Wheeler checked the charge of their cavalry by a counter charge with his staff and escort. During the melee which ensued, Gen. Wheeler was entirely enveloped by the enemy. Lieut. Pointer, his Aid-de-Camp, was captured, only escaping by a successful but desperate conflict with the guards. The enemy made the greatest exertions to capture our battery, in all of which they were signally defeated. In this affair, which took place within the enemy's lines, our loss was less than half that sustained by the enemy. The enemy's force actually engaged, according to his own account, was 3,700 Infantry, and 1,500 Cavalry, while our entire force was less than a thousand men, many of whom did not become engaged.

During January several conflicts occurred with the enemy's cavalry, which resulted in our capturing a considerable number of horses, arms and prisoners.

February 22d, Gen. Thomas, commanding the Federal army of the Cumberland, commenced his advance upon our army at Dalton, our force being much weakened the greater part having been sent to Mississippi, to meet the advance of Sherman's force from Vicksburg towards Meridian. Gen. Thomas' object was to cause our weakened forces to evacuate the strongly fortified position at Dalton, which he then felt confident of holding against any force we might afterwards be able to bring against him. Gen. Wheeler immediately divined his movements, and notified his commander, Gen. Johnston. By the most zealous efforts, Gen. Wheeler held the enemy with such firmness as to enable our forces to return and occupy their position at Dalton, before the enemy had completed his short march of twenty-five miles. Thomas finding himself baffled in his attempt, after a few pretty severe demonstrations upon our lines, withdrew on the night of the 26th to his old station, mortified and disappointed at his utter failure. Gen. Wheeler followed him closely, harrassing his rear, and capturing a number of prisoners. During all this movement our losses were trifling, and the spirit of our army improved, while the enemy suffered heavily, in both spirit, men and material. This was called the *Battle of Rocky Face*.

Skirmishing continued more frequent as spring advanced, until a brisk skirmish became almost of daily occurrence.

Early in March, a Brigade of the enemy's cavalry under Col. Harrison, having extended itself a short distance from the main body of its infantry support, committing many depredations upon citizens, Gen. Wheeler determined to attack them with his available force, which could be spared from picket duty, about 600 men. He crossed Taylor's Ridge on the night of March 8th, and threw himself upon the enemy, utterly defeating and routing their entire brig-

ade, capturing their camp, stores, equipage, and a number of prisoners, with their horses and arms. Unfortunately a force which Gen. Wheeler had dispatched the night previous, with orders to gain the enemy's rear, failed to carry out the instructions, which gave most of the enemy an opportunity to escape, else nearly all would certainly have been captured. As it was, however, we had lost but one man, while the entire brigade of the enemy was placed *hors du combat*. An eye witness giving an account of the affair, states that the charge which broke the enemy's center, was led by Gen. Wheeler, in person. On April 3d, hearing that a regiment of the enemy were on picket duty, near Cleaveland, East Tenn., Gen. Wheeler made a night's march with a small force, charged in upon the enemy at daylight, dispersed the enemy, capturing their camps, wagons, and twenty-four officers and men, with their horses and arms. During the latter part of April, the enemy pushed out strong bodies of troops to reconnoiter our position, causing heavy fighting between them and our cavalry, all of which resulted in our advantage, as Gen. Wheeler fought behind strongly fortified positions, which he had built successively along the line of the enemy's march. Sometimes, however, when opportunity offered, he attacked them by charging with a few squadrons some weak point, capturing a few prisoners, and gaining other advantages. On May 1st, the enemy commenced his grand advance of over one hundred thousand men, against less than one-half that number. Gen. Wheeler fought them steadily and firmly until the 7th, when the two armies stood *face to face*. A federal correspondent in speaking of these fights, states, "the Rebel Cavalry, under Wheeler, fought our advance with an abandon and desperation, worthy of a better cause."

BATTLE OF DUG GAP.

On the 8th, an attempt was made to gain our rear, by passing over *Taylor's Bridge*, at Dug Gap. Gen. Wheeler met and repulsed this, with G igsby's small but brave brigade of Kentucky cavalry, who after a fight of two hours, entirely defeated and drove back a corps of the enemy, who had made repeated assaults upon the position so bravely held by these few men, who, dismounted, and partially screened by temporary barricades, poured deadly volleys into the enemy's advancing columns, until towards evening, when they finally withdrew, and made no further attempt to take the position they found so ably defended.

Thus, by taking advantage of the favorable ground, one small brigade of dismounted cavalry, defeated an entire corps of the enemy, saved our army from being flanked out of position, and in two hours killed and wounded more of the enemy, than they numbered men.

BATTLES AROUND VARNELL'S STATION.

On the following day, May 9th, Gen. Wheeler met and repulsed McCook's division of cavalry, which was endeavoring to turn our right, near Rocky Face. We captured a few prisoners and horses,

and lost but a few men wounded. The enemy were driven back in confusion. The following day, they again made a strong move on our right, pushing down the main Cleveland and Dalton road. As the enemy were in strong force, they pushed back our pickets rapidly. Gen. Wheeler placed his troops promptly in a position, behind a large field; when the enemy had advanced to a convenient distance, Gen. Wheeler charged upon them, breaking their lines, and causing their total defeat and route. One hundred and fifty of the enemy's infantry were captured. Gen. Wheeler pushed on, and defeated the *Cavalry Reserves*, capturing Col. Legrange, a brigade commander, one stand of colors, and a number of prisoners and horses. The entire force of the enemy fell back upon their main army rapidly, and in confusion. This signal victory was gained with less than nine hundred men, and over a force at least three times our strength; the enemy became so scattered, that many who escaped, never returned to their ranks. Our loss was less than forty. Gen. Kelly and Allen, of Wheeler's command, were mentioned by Wheeler, for their gallantry and good conduct.

On the 11th, another large Federal force advanced upon Wheeler's lines, but after heavy skirmishing, retired, carrying their dead and wounded with them. On the 12th, Gen. Wheeler pursuant to orders from Gen. Johnston, moved with twenty-two hundred cavalry, to attack a large force of the enemy, near Varnell Station; a warm fight ensued. The enemy, which consisted of cavalry, were driven to their fortifications, on Rocky Face Bridge, with heavy loss in killed, wounded and captured, all of which fell into our hands, together with their horses and arms. This movement also caused the stampede of a large federal train, which was burnt by the teamsters.

FIGHT WHILE COVERING RETREAT FROM DALTON TO RESACA.

That night Gen. Johnston decided to move his army from Dalton to Resaca, and Gen. Wheeler was ordered to relieve the entire line of battle with his cavalry deployed as skirmishers, and to cover the movement, retarding the enemy's advance. The enemy commenced his pursuit at daylight, pressing on with great vigor. Gen. Wheeler had prepared several successive lines of defence, dismounting his men behind temporary barricades, behind which he fought, checking and repulsing the enemy's advancing lines, retreating along his successive barricades, inflicting heavy losses upon the enemy, every step they marched. The fighting was continued during the entire day; the enemy being compelled to march two entire divisions of infantry in line of battle. During the advance, notwithstanding their exertions, Gen. Wheeler so retarded them, that they only advanced seven miles, between daylight and dark.

BATTLE OF RESECA.

On the 14th, all Sherman's columns advanced to attack our line behind their entrenchments at Resaca, on the Oostanula. The country being too broken for the use of mounted men, Gen. Wheeler, pursuant to an order from Gen Johnston, fought a portion of his men, dismounted, side by side with the veteran infantry of Johnston's army. Gen Wheeler's official report speaks highly of the conduct of Gen. Hume, Kelly, Allen and Col Vason, commanding a Georgia regiment of Cavalry. During the fight, Stoneman's federal cavalry dashed upon the hospital of Hardee's corps, which had been left in an exposed position; Gen. Wheeler observed the movement, charged upon Stoneman with his mounted reserves, re-captured and saved the hospitals, and defeated the enemy, capturing two stand of colors, and thirty prisoners.

FIGHTING INCIDENT TO THE MOVEMENT FROM RESACA
TO CASSVILLE.

After fighting Sherman's large army for two days, behind his works at Resaca, Gen. Johnston deemed it advisable to withdraw. Accordingly, on the night of the 15th, the Army of Tennessee marched silently over the Oostanula river, and Gen. Wheeler was again called upon to cover the movement to Cassville. A battery of five guns had by accident been left in the works, by an infantry corps, which Wheeler hauled off by hand, thus saving it from certain capture.

At daylight, on the 16th, the enemy again commenced a vigorous pursuit, pushing on with long lines of infantry, preceded by heavy lines of skirmishers. During the 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th, Gen. Wheeler, with his command, were continually engaging the enemy. Line after line of Barricades were taken up, and abandoned when no longer tenable, until after four days fighting, Wheeler was driven behind the fortifications erected by our army, at Cassville.

On the 17th, Wheeler was pressed so warmly, that he was obliged to call upon Gen. Hardee for assistance. Gen. Hardee promptly placed a division in position, which, together with the cavalry, successfully held the enemy for four hours in one position.

On the 18th, the enemy's cavalry attempted to turn our flank, which was promptly met by Wheeler, who with Allen's brigade, charged the enemy, driving them at full speed for two miles, capturing two stand of colors, and several prisoners.

On the evening of the 19th, the enemy advanced, and commenced heavy skirmishing upon our fortified lines at Cassville. During the night, our army again abandoned their works, and retired across the Etowah. Gen. Wheeler followed, engaging the enemy's advancing columns, and burning the bridges, thus again separating the contending armies

BATTLE OF CASS STATION—CAPTURE OF WAGONS.

On the 22d, pursuant to an order from Army Head Quarters, Gen. Wheeler having disposed a portion of his command to watch the movements of the enemy, moved with the balance across the Etowah, to the enemy's rear, attacked and defeated a force of the enemy guarding Sherman's train, capturing two hundred and fifty wagons, and seven hundred prisoners. Wheeler pursued the defeated enemy to Cass Station, where they in their alarm burnt another large train, and a large amount of military stores. Over one hundred loaded wagons were brought off, and the remainder burnt. While Wheeler was engaged in this work, Stoneman attacked our troops with a large body of fresh cavalry. Gen. Wheeler met the attack on the broad fields north of Cass Station, charged the enemy, broke their lines, and drove them *pell mell* for three miles, upon the infantry support near Centerville, capturing several stand of colors, and one hundred and fifty prisoners, in the route which ensued. The wagons, prisoners, colors and horses were brought safely to our lines. The enemy having crossed the Etowah, Wheeler found the army moving to New Hope Church, to meet the enemy.

BATTLE OF NEW HOPE.

Gen. Wheeler again had his men dismounted, and placed in the trenches with infantry fighting with them in the battle of the 26th.

BATTLE OF THE 27TH.

On the 27th, Howard's 4th corps, numbering over twenty thousand muskets, made a rapid march upon our right flank, and attempted by a warm attack, to drive back our right, and attack us in reverse. Gen. Wheeler discovered this movement, and with a portion of his men dismounted, he met the enemy, who marched upon him in columns of companies. This enabled Wheeler to attack and drive back the advancing lines. They finally rallied, and a severe fight ensued. Wheeler held his ground, inflicting heavy loss upon the enemy, who repeatedly charged his lines, being each time handsomely repulsed. Granberry's Brigade of Infantry being finally sent to his support, he charged the enemy with both infantry and cavalry, driving back Howard's entire corps, and nearly destroying the organization of the division under the *Federal Gen. T. J. Wood*. Lowrey's and Quawle's Brigades were also sent to Wheeler's support, but not until the victory was nearly completed. A number of prisoners and over one thousand stand of arms were captured. The loss of the enemy was estimated at between four and five thousand actually killed, wounded and captured, besides the demoralizing effect of signal defeat, while our troops were elated in a corresponding degree by victory. Six hundred of the enemy were buried by our troops. Our loss was scarcely one-tenth that of the enemy.

MOVEMENT OF THE ENEMY TOWARDS RAILROAD.

From the 27th of May, until June 18th, Gen. Wheeler had most of his command dismounted behind breastworks, continually opposed by a corps of infantry, who were continually skirmishing with such vigor as to amount to almost continuous battle. Two desperate assaults were made upon our works by the enemy's infantry, which were repelled, inflicting heavy loss upon the enemy. Several attempts were made to turn our right flank, which Wheeler met and defeated.

BATTLE OF KENNESAW.

On the 19th, our army retired to Kennesaw Mountain, and Wheeler after covering the movement, again took up his line, dismounted behind breastworks, side by side with the infantry. Here Wheeler's line was constantly engaging a line of the enemy's entrenched infantry, which kept up continued and severe fighting.

On the 20th, Wheeler took eleven hundred men from his ranks, attacked and routed Garrard's division of cavalry, capturing ninety prisoners, with their horses and arms.

On the 25th, Wheeler's lines were vigorously assaulted by several lines of infantry, which were repulsed with slight loss to ourselves, and heavy losses to the enemy; besides holding his line during this period, he nearly every day successfully engaged their cavalry, capturing prisoners and horses.

CROSSING OF THE CHATTAHOOCHEE.

On July 5th, our army having withdrawn to the line of the Chattahoochee, Wheeler was left to hold the enemy in check, until the infantry was ready to receive them. The enemy's (4th) corps, under Howard, pressed warmly upon Wheeler, but was held in check by severe fighting, until the object was attained. Here a most difficult problem presented itself; that of crossing a river while heavily pressed by an overwhelming enemy. By selecting a rear guard, which he remained with in person, fighting the advancing lines of the enemy with great desperation, the work was however successfully and beautifully accomplished.

Skirmishing with both artillery and small arms continued incessantly, until July 9th, when the enemy commenced crossing the river near Roswell factory, and commenced their slow but steady march upon Atlanta, opposed by Gen. Wheeler, who fought them with such vigor, as to cause them to strongly entrench every mile of their advance. This fighting continued until the 18th, when Gen. Hood assumed command, and determined to change the policy from the fabian to the aggressive.

HEAVY FIGHTING BETWEEN McPHERSON AND WHEELER, DURING THE ENEMY'S ADVANCE UPON DECATUR AND ATLANTA.

On the 18th, McPherson, with three army corps, commenced his advance upon Atlanta, by way of Decatur, and Wheeler with his cavalry, was alone left to retard the movement. On the 19th, after severe fighting, McPherson reached Decatur, and turned towards Atlanta. Here Wheeler had several successive lines of works constructed, which enabled him to offer a most formidable resistance. On the 20th, McPherson charged his breastworks with infantry, supported by six lines of battle, all of which charges were signally repulsed, with heavy losses to the enemy. During the evening Wheeler charged a weak portion of McPherson's line, driving him back towards Decatur, and capturing several prisoners. On the 21st, McPherson again advanced, and again made a most determined charge upon Wheeler's works. The enemy were repulsed at every point during the first charges, but finally by turning our flank, our right gave way. Wheeler on seeing this, rallied his men, charged the victorious enemy, who were upon our fortifications, drove them off in confusion, retaking our works, with some thirty prisoners. The position thus gallantly gained, was held by Wheeler until the following day, when relieved by our own infantry.

During these brilliant and severe engagements, Wheeler had less than one-tenth of the force which was brought against him. The enemy's losses were heavy in every fight, while Wheeler, fighting dismounted, behind breastworks, sustained slight losses.

WHEELER'S BATTLE AND VICTORY OF DECATUR, JULY 22d.

On the night of the 21st, Gen. Wheeler moved around the enemy's left flank, and attacked a division of infantry, which occupied the town of Decatur, in strong fortifications. The fight was severe, lasting about two hours, and resulted in the complete defeat of the enemy, who were routed from their fortifications, and several hundred prisoners captured. Wheeler also captured their camps, one section of artillery, three stand of colors, their stores, hospitals, &c. Wheeler then pushed on, capturing a large wagon train, all of which property was brought off to our lines, or destroyed. Our loss was less than a hundred, killed and wounded. Gen. McPherson, of the federal army, was killed. The troops of the enemy thus defeated, at Decatur, was the extreme left of the federal army; and nothing but the rapidity of Wheeler's movements, enabled him to accomplish his purpose before the point could be reinforced. One of the objects of the attack was to create a diversion for Gen. Hardee, who successfully attacked another portion of the enemy's line, at the same hour. Heavy skirmishing was kept up until the morning of the 27th,

GEN. WHEELER DEFEATS AND DESTROYS THE GREAT
RAIDS OF STONEMAN, GARRARD AND MCCOOK, CAP-
TURING, KILLING AND WOUNDING 5,000 MEN, AND
CAPTURING THEIR HORSES, ARTILLERY, WAGONS,
COLORS, ARMS, &C.

Gen. Sherman had officially announced to his army, that Atlanta would fall without a battle. His plans were well laid, stupendous and magnificent. Three heavy columns of cavalry were to penetrate the country, destroy our depot of stores and railroads, then concentrate, relieve the thirty-five thousand prisoners at Andersonville, and march with them in triumph through our country. On the morning of July 27th, the three columns moved.

Gen. McCook, with three brigade, numbering thirty-two hundred picked men, the flower of their cavalry, crossed the Chattahoochee near Campbellton, to strike the railroad at Lovejoy's Station, twenty miles south of Atlanta.

Garrard and Stoneman, each commanding divisions, numbering together nearly seven thousand men, moved towards Lithonia, there dividing. Garrard moving towards Lovejoys, and Stoneman south easterly, towards Macon.

Gen. Wheeler was on the alert, was soon master of their intention, but being on duty, holding an important line, it was necessary for him to be relieved by other troops, before starting. Notwithstanding the delays, Gen. Wheeler had by midnight attacked Garrard's flank, and interposed troops between his advance and destination. At daylight Wheeler continued the attack, driving Garrard back towards Sherman's main army, capturing three wagons, and several prisoners and horses. Wheeler also despatched three brigades after Stoneman, and leaving one brigade under Gen. Kelly, to watch Garrard, started with the balance of his command, (now reduced to one thousand men,) after McCook, who finding himself pursued, commenced a rapid retreat towards Newnan, burning every bridge on his line of march. Gen. Wheeler rebuilt the bridges, and by the following morning had marched seventy miles, continually encountering the enemy's rear guard, who in the extreme darkness of the night, fired repeatedly at our advance. At daylight Wheeler attacked McCook vigorously, defeated him, capturing two hundred and sixty prisoners, and killing fifty of the enemy in the running fight which ensued. Again Wheeler overtook McCook near Newnan, and by a rapid movement, placed two hundred men in his front, which so checked his advance, as to force him to a general battle. Wheeler attacked with great vigor, and after a severe fight of four hours, completely defeated the enemy, capturing nine hundred and fifty prisoners, together with all their cannon, horses, arms, colors and wagons, and re-capturing three hundred of our officers who had been captured by the enemy at Fayetteville.

The column Gen. Wheeler sent after Stoneman, was nearly equally successful, capturing Stoneman, and five hundred prisoners, the remainder of his command being scattered through the country.

Wheeler detached several parties to pick up the scattered fragments from Stoneman's and McCook's command. The total number of prisoners captured in these engagements, and incident thereto, amounted to 3,200, including one Major General, and five brigade commanders. The total number of our troops liberated from the enemy, was three hundred and fifty, most of whom were officers. Two batteries were captured, together with thirty wagons, and two hundred pack mules. The enemy lost over eight hundred, killed and wounded, besides large numbers who were scattered through the country, and never returned to the army. The enemy's total loss reached five thousand. Thus was destroyed by General Wheeler, the largest and most dangerous raid inaugurated during the war; and what is more creditable, it was done with a force scarcely half that of the enemy. Gen Allen, Hume, Anderson and Col. Breckenridge, were distinguished in these engagements. During the next ten days, skirmishing was continued in the works around Atlanta.

GEN. WHEELER'S RAID IN NORTH GEORGIA AND TENNESSEE.

The absolute impossibility of feeding so many animals, made it necessary to send a portion of our cavalry to the enemy's rear. Pursuant to Gen. Hood's orders, Gen. Wheeler left Covington Aug. 9th, with about four thousand men. The following morning he struck the railroad near Marietta, with a portion of his command, tearing it up for nearly a mile. At Calhoun, he again struck the road with a brigade, which captured a train of cars, destroyed the track for some distance, and then pressed on, defeated the enemy, and captured a drove of 1,700 beef cattle, together with a wagon train, and a few prisoners. Most of the cattle were sent out and turned over to Gen. Hood. At Dalton, Gen. Wheeler again struck the railroad with Hume's and Kelly's commands, which he effectually destroyed for several miles, besides destroying it at various other points between Resaca and Chattanooga. Dalton was captured after a short fight, by which about 200 prisoners, 200 mules, several wagons, and a large supply of stores, arms, &c., were secured. These were appropriated or destroyed. He also captured a block house, two miles south of the town, and destroyed the water tanks which were thus guarded. A large amount of wood, and railroad and bridge timbers was also destroyed. Gen. Martin had been ordered by Wheeler to strike the road at Tilton, but failed to do so and his command consequently did not accomplish its part of the good work. It was for this failure that Gen. Martin was placed in arrest.

The federal Gen. Steadman advanced on us at Dalton, the following day, with a heavy force of infantry, which necessitated the withdrawal of Wheeler's forces, towards Spring Place. During the engagement which ensued, Gen. Steadman was wounded. A feint was made upon Chattanooga, which caused Steadman's rapid retreat to that place. Then a feint upon Dalton, causing him to march again to that point. Another feint was made upon Chattanooga, which

started him again to that point. Thus three days were spent by the enemy in marching, before they commenced repairing the road. On the 19th, when Wheeler left its vicinity, the road was not repaired, and no train had passed over it since the evening of August 9th; so it is safe to conclude the total interruption was at least twelve days.

The absolute absence of forage near the railroad, and the horrible condition of our horses, which were very weak, and many of them absolutely unserviceable, made it necessary to move from that point. Before crossing the Hiawassee, Wheeler destroyed the railroad pretty thoroughly, between Cleveland and Charleston. At this point, several detachments were made to work upon the railroad south of Chattanooga, and some sick and wounded men were sent back to the army, reducing Wheeler's force about three hundred men. The original intention was to cross the Tennessee River at Cotton Port; but the heavy and incessant rains had swollen the river to a greater depth than had ever been known before, at that season of the year. This necessitated moving above Loudon. At Stewart's landing, a camp of the enemy was attacked, 69 wagons, and a number of prisoners and horses captured. At Athens, a large supply of military stores were captured and appropriated. Finding the enemy were preparing to procure large supplies of forage from East Tennessee, Wheeler had the railroad destroyed from Calhoun to Loudon, and the large supplies of forage collected near the depot burned. On reaching the Holston, it was found to be an impassable torrent. We then moved around Knoxville, crossing the French Broad and Holston, in the face of the enemy. Forces of cavalry were also sent out against us, but they were promptly attacked by Gen. Wheeler, and driven back to Knoxville. At this point Gen. Williams became separated with two brigades, and half our artillery, and did not again join the command. With the remaining force, hardly exceeding two thousand men, and three guns, Gen. Wheeler started for Middle Tennessee. Clinch river was crossed near Clinton, and the mountains crossed from Kinston to Sparta. Two days march brought us to the railroad, where real work commenced. The garrison at Gallatin fled, upon Wheeler's approach, and their stores were burnt. Detachments sent south of Murfreesboro, destroyed the road at various points, while the main command after taking McMinnville, (with large supplies) Lebanon, and other garrisons, struck the railroad at Smyrna, capturing a train loaded with supplies. After a short engagement, the block house surrendered, and the bridge over Stewart's creek was burned. Other minor bridges were thoroughly burned, to within a short distance of Murfreesboro. Wheeler then moved on, destroying the road to within eight miles of Nashville, which occupied two days of hard work. On the 2d day, Gen Rosseau made a warm attack upon Wheeler, which was gallantly met by a portion of the command, which charged the enemy, and drove him two miles, capturing a number of prisoners, and two stand of colors. Wheeler also at one time had possession of one of the enemy's batteries. but they were reinforced with infantry, which prevented our bringing it from the field. The route of the enemy was so complete, that they did not trouble Wheeler's

command any more that day. Near Levergne he captured a train of wagons, and several prisoners.

On the evening of the 28th, Wheeler turned his course towards the Alabama and Tennessee Railroad. This he struck a short distance below Nashville, destroying it most effectually for many miles. Near Lynnville, a considerable number of cars were captured, and stores were taken in more or less quantities, at various depots along the road. Near Franklin, Gen. Rosseau again attacked him, but was soon so routed, that he made no attempt to follow, during that or the next day. Among the wounded of the enemy, was the Federal Col. Brownlow. It was here that we lost our gallant and beloved Gen. Kelly. At Campbell's Station, we were quite surrounded, but crept out of the net under cover of the night. At Campbellton, Wheeler was again obliged to fight a largely superior force, which he repulsed. Here all the Tennessee troops were sent off recruiting, and the column moved on to the Tennessee river, where Wheeler lay for five or six days; but being hardly pressed by Gen. Rosseau and Granger, he crossed the river safely, having previously sent over his trains and wounded men, whom he had brought out with him in wagons and ambulances. Gen. Wheeler also established a depot for collecting recruits, which soon numbered over two thousand.

The heavy rains which fell upon us during the first two weeks of our trip, made the roads difficult, and crossing rivers almost impossible. To reach Middle Tennessee, we were obliged either to ford or swim fourteen rivers, which seriously retarded our movements.

The result of Wheeler's labors during this raid, sum up as follows:

- Capture and delivery to the army of 1,700 beef cattle.
- Over one hundred government wagons.
- Over seven hundred mules and horses.
- Over four hundred and fifty prisoners.
- Capture of Dalton, with many stores.
- Capture of garrison at Stewart's Landing, with stores, &c.
- Capture of Athens.
- “ “ Marysville.
- “ “ Clinton.
- “ “ McMiniville.
- “ “ Lebanon.
- “ “ Liberty.
- “ “ Smyrna.
- “ “ Lynnville, with small garrison and stores.

In some of these places the garrison's escaped upon our approach.

Compelling the officer at Gallatin, to evacuate his post, and burn his stores.

Destruction of forage, &c., collected for Sherman's army, in East Tennessee.

The capture and destruction of several trains of cars, loaded with supplies.

The complete stoppage of communication between Chattanooga and Sherman's army, for twelve days.

The complete stoppage of communication between Nashville and

Chattanooga, by both railroads, for twenty-four days. Compelling Sherman to send to his rear, forces treble our strength.

Bringing out from the enemy's lines, over two thousand recruits for his own command, and nearly three thousand for other commands.

All this was accomplished with a loss of about one hundred and twenty killed and wounded, while much heavier loss was inflicted upon the enemy.

The portion of Gen. Wheeler's command which came out by way of East Tennessee, met, repulsed, and defeated the heavy raid under Major General Burnbridge, which saved the vast salt works, in Western Virginia.

On the 2d of October, pursuant to instructions from Gen. Hood, Wheeler moved again upon the enemy's communication, near Dalton, and destroyed the road and communication completely, until the 13th, no train having passed over the road, during that time. Gen. Wheeler also destroyed two locomotives and trains, loaded with stores, which he had captured. On his return he met Gen. Hood, marching from Altoona, and accompanied him, in command of his cavalry, during his brilliant movement around Dalton, during which occurred several engagements.

On the movement of our army towards Gadsden, Wheeler covered the retreat, fighting the enemy continually, for several days. During this movement, Gen. Wheeler compelled the enemy to evacuate Rome, leaving much property, and many prisoners.

In the latter part of October, Gen. Wheeler became convinced that the enemy under Sherman, was about to march through our country to Savannah, and with great difficulty gained permission to take a portion of his command to Georgia, to assist in its defence. Gen. Wheeler only felt that with his small force he could defend the important cities, and by defeating Sherman's cavalry, prevent its raiding over the country.

WHEELER OPPOSES SHERMAN IN HIS MARCH THROUGH GEORGIA, SAVES MACON, FORSYTH, GRIFFIN, AUGUSTA, AND OTHER CITIES.

By rapid marching, Gen. Wheeler succeeded Nov. 15th, in reaching his position south of Atlanta, when Sherman, (according to his own official report,) started on his march with sixty thousand infantry, and Kilpatrick's cavalry, numbering fifty-five hundred men. Gen. Wheeler being the senior officer in Georgia, took control of the defence of the cities, and by hard fighting repulsed the enemy, in his attempts upon Griffin and Forsyth, where considerable amounts of government property were stored. On the 21st, the enemy reached the vicinity of Macon, and moved to attack the place, from the east side.

The only troops Gen. Wheeler had for the defence were about two thousand militia and detailed men and his cavalry. General Wheeler moved out to meet the enemy, and fought them, moving back gradually to the fortifications, which he held so firmly that

finally the enemy raised the siege and continued their march, to the joy of the troops and inhabitants, who had hardly thought the defence of the place possible. Gen. Hardee arrived at Macon during the siege, and from that time gave general directions of the management of the department.

Macon being safe Gen. Wheeler moved to the enemy's front, and again fought them near the Oconee River, defeating their cavalry, and capturing a number of prisoners and wagons. After Sherman had crossed the Oconee, Kilpatrick started on a rapid raid towards Augusta, which, if successful, would have been the most disastrous blow the enemy could then have dealt us. Wheeler pursued Kilpatrick, overtaking and bringing him to battle, which resulted in Kilpatrick's defeat, thus saving Augusta, and driving Kilkpatrick with heavy loss back upon Sherman's main army. Two other attempts were made by the enemy to reach Augusta, which were met and foiled by Wheeler, who prevented the enemy from coming nearer than twenty-five miles of the city. During the entire march Wheeler was continually fighting the enemy in some manner, and effectually preventing his cavalry from raiding over the country. On reaching Savannah, Wheeler had a portion of his command dismounted in the trenches, and with the remainder held a column of the enemy, which was endeavoring to reach our only line of communication. This he successfully accomplished, thus enabling our troops to withdraw from Savannah, which otherwise would have certainly been sacrificed. The result of Wheeler's operations was the protection of a vast extent of country which would otherwise have been destroyed, saving the cities of Augusta, Macon, Forsyth, and Griffin, and capturing, killing and wounding over two thousand of the enemy. From the evacuation of Savannah *Wheeler's command* guarded the country in all directions, and frustrated all the attempts to raid in any direction.

WHEELER HARRASSES SHERMAN AS HE MOVES THROUGH THE CAROLINAS—AUGUSTA SAVED AGAIN

In the latter part of January, General Sherman commenced his march towards Augusta, which march Gen. Wheeler contested step by step, daily inflicting heavy losses upon the enemy. Every bridge was burned by Wheeler, and deadly volleys poured into Sherman's columns as they attempted to force passages of streams by fording. By this means the progress of the enemy was slow, and thus ample time was given for the defence of Augusta and other cities. At River's Bridge, which was defended by our infantry and artillery, the enemy had nearly surrounded our troops, when Gen. Wheeler arrived with a single brigade, charged the enemy, driving them back, and thus saved our infantry and artillery from capture. On February 10th and 11th, Gen. Wheeler had a severe fight with the enemy at Aiken, driving back vastly superior numbers in the greatest confusion, capturing, killing and wounding over two hundred of the enemy. By these victories not only was Augusta and Aiken saved, but also the vast manufactories in Graniteville and its vicinity. At

Columbia, Gen. Beauregard had assumed command, with a portion of the army of Tenn., to defend it. Wheeler fought the enemy warmly upon their approach to the city, holding them for two days beyond gunshot range. Finally the enemy reached cannon range, and were also moving forces around to the north side of the town, Beauregard withdrew his infantry, and left Wheeler to again oppose the enemy's advance. During these movements Wheeler continued to fight the enemy, daily capturing large numbers of prisoners. Near White's Store he captured two hundred and fifty, and near Chester, Lancaster, and Rockingham he also captured large numbers. Near Johnsonville, Wheeler attacked the enemy's cavalry, capturing four hundred prisoners, and gained other advantages. During this fight Wheeler captured Kilpatrick's sword and horse. At Fayetteville the enemy attacked a body of our cavalry from Virginia, driving them back a short distance. Wheeler came up, attacked and defeated the enemy, driving them out of the town. At Averysboro, Gen. Hardee had become engaged with a largely superior force of the enemy. Gen. Wheeler hearing the guns, hastened to his relief, reaching the spot just in time to check a force of the enemy which was turning his flank, and would have caused great disaster to his army. With Wheeler's help Hardee successfully continued the fight until night fall, when he withdrew towards Bentonville, Wheeler covering his retreat.

BATTLE OF BENTONVILLE.

At Bentonville, Gen. Wheeler held the left of our army, and continued heavy fighting during the two days of the engagement. On the evening of the second day, Mower's federal corps pressed back a body of our troops, which were guarding an important point, completely turning our flank, and took possession of our only line of retreat or communication. Gen. Wheeler, seeing the critical state of affairs, charged the enemy's infantry with his cavalry, both in front and upon the flank, driving them from their positions in complete route, capturing their skirmish line, and enabling us to establish our lines. By this bold, daring and skilful movement General Wheeler saved our army, which otherwise certainly would have been lost. General Wheeler held the enemy at bay until dark, which enabled General Johnston to withdraw across Mill Creek, leaving Wheeler to cover the movements, which he did, during which occurred several severe engagements with the enemy. After the battle of Bentonville, Sherman moved with his army to Goldsboro, thus ending the campaign through the Carolinas, during which Gen. Wheeler captured or placed *hors du combat* more than five thousand of the enemy, defeating them in more than twenty pitched battles, and saving from the enemy's ravages Augusta and several smaller cities. All this was done without Wheeler's meeting the slightest reverse. During the latter part of March and first weeks in April, Wheeler kept the enemy in observation, encountering foraging and reconnoitering parties nearly every day. When Sherman commenced his march upon Raleigh, Wheeler's command opposed him, and covered Gen. Johnston's retreat. After reaching

Raleigh, Kilpatrick pushed out after us, Wheeler met and repulsed their charge, then charged the enemy, driving them back for two miles. Thus ended hostile conflicts east of the Mississippi River. During the spring, General Wheeler was appointed by the President *Lieutenant General* of Cavalry, he having held a command which entitled him to that rank continuously for two years and a half, a longer period than any other officer of the Confederate army had retained continuous command of an army corps in the field. Gen. Wheeler's division commanders were Major Gens. Allen, Young, Hume, and Brig. Gen. Dibrell, all of whom were brave and skilful officers. Upon the surrender of the Confederate Army, Gen. Wheeler issued the following

FAREWELL ADDRESS.

HEAD QUARTERS, CAVALRY CORPS, }
April 29th, 1865. }

Gallant Comrades:

You have fought your fight, your task is done. During a four years struggle for liberty, you have exhibited courage, fortitude and devotion; you are the sole victors of more than two hundred severely contested fields; you have participated in more than a thousand conflicts of arms; you are Heroes, Veterans, Patriots; the bones of your comrades mark battle-fields upon the soil of Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi: you have done all that human exertion could accomplish. In bidding you adieu, I desire to tender my thanks for your gallantry in battle, your fortitude under suffering, and your devotion at all times to the holy cause you have done so much to maintain. I desire also to express my gratitude for the kind feeling you have seen fit to extend towards myself, and to invoke upon you the blessings of our Heavenly Father, to whom we must always look for support in the hour of distress.

Brethren in the cause of freedom, Comrades in arms, I bid you farewell!

J. WHEELER.

General Wheeler bore a prominent part in the great battles of Shiloh, Farmington, Miss., the fights around Corinth, Perryville, Murfreesboro, Chickamauga, the first eight days of the siege of Knoxville, Ringold, Rocky Face, Dalton, Resaca, Cassville, New Hope, battles around Kennesaw Mountain, battle of Peach Tree Creek, Decatur, battles around Atlanta, siege of Savannah, battles of Averysboro and Bentonville. Besides this, and being under fire in over eight hundred skirmishes, Gen. Wheeler has commanded in more than two hundred battles, many of which, considering the numbers engaged, were the most severe and successful recorded in the history of cavalry.

In each case where his strength has been equal, and in many cases where it was far inferior to that by which he was opposed, he has entirely overcome the enemy, capturing or dispersing him. In many cases General Wheeler has been called upon to engage forces many times his superior in order to retard the enemy while covering

retreats, or to create a diversion while important movements were carried on in other localities. Operations of this character, which are the most difficult the service presents, have been conducted by Gen. Wheeler with such consummate skill that not only had he invariably accomplished the desired object, but in almost every case inflicted a loss upon the enemy far heavier than that which he himself sustained. As a commander of the cavalry of our army, Gen. Wheeler has been more successful than any other cavalry officer in the Confederate armies. In no instance has an army met a reverse or been otherwise than successful in its undertakings, while he commanded the cavalry of that army. The only disasters which were visited upon the army of Tennessee occurred during his absence upon other duty. During the battle of Missionary Ridge, Wheeler was with Longstreet at Knoxville. When Atlanta was wrested from us Wheeler was in Tennessee, and during Hood's disastrous campaign in Tennessee, Wheeler was fighting Sherman in Georgia. At Perryville, Murfreesboro, Chickamauga and the movements and fighting incident thereto, and during Johnston's brilliant battles from Dalton to Atlanta, in all of which our troops gained advantages over the enemy, Gen. Wheeler commanded the cavalry, and by his skillful management contributed much to the success of our army.

Wheeler's destruction of Rosecrans' wagons and train prevented the Army of the Cumberland from moving forward one step for six months after the battle of Murfreesboro, and his raid in Tennessee, just after the battle of Chickamauga, besides destroying vast trains and stores, and breaking up his communications, also drew all of Rosecrans' cavalry away from its army, to which must be attributed the saving of our army from utter destruction at Missionary Ridge. Any one acquainted with the country can readily perceive how easily our army could have been destroyed, had a column of ten thousand cavalry crossed the Chickamauga River at Red House Ford, and struck our flank while Hooker's infantry was so closely pressing our rear. During all of Wheeler's career, in no instance did the enemy embarrass our army by striking our communications, and in every such attempt they were severely punished and frequently signally defeated.

In Rosecrans' official report of the campaign of Chickamauga, he states that part of his plan, was to destroy the railroad south of Dalton, and Gen. Stanley with his cavalry attempted the operation. This movement was met and defeated by Wheeler at Alpine, which resulted in Stanley being relieved of his command. Rosecrans also states in his affidavits before the Committee on the Conduct of the War, that one reason of his delay in advancing upon our army was the superiority of the cavalry under Wheeler, to his. As Wheeler's cavalry was numerically inferior to Rosecrans', he must have reference to its superiority in other respects.

Such is the career of a man whose promotion, based upon his own merits, without having influence or friends, presents a rapidity of military advancement with scarcely a parallel in American or European armies. A Cadet at seventeen, a Second Lieutenant at twenty-two, a First Lieutenant at twenty-three, a Colonel at twenty-four, a Brigadier General at twenty-five, a Major General at twenty-

six, a Corps Commander at twenty-six, a Lieutenant General at twenty-eight.

Gen. Wheeler has had sixteen horses killed under him, and a great number wounded. His saddle equipments and clothes have also been frequently struck by the missiles of the enemy. He has himself been three times slightly wounded, and once painfully. He has had thirty-two staff officers, or acting staff officers, killed or wounded. In almost every case when his staff officers have been wounded, they were immediately by his side, as they sank from their horses to the ground. No officer, since the commencement of the war, has been more exposed to the missiles of death than Gen. Wheeler. That his life has been thus far spared, while so constantly surrounded by carnage and death, his thanks are due to that God who from his infancy he had been taught to reverence.

Gen. Wheeler, although small in stature, is in appearance "every inch a soldier," and bears a head which, as termed by the phrenologists, is "admirably fixed." His eye is the very impersonation of that quick conception, heroic valor and dauntless courage, which has stamped him as one of the great men of this Revolution, and which explains how he manœuvres his command under a hail-storm of the missiles of death, regarding them no more than leaves wafted by the wind—or how he leads his squadrons to the charge, crashing into the enemy's ranks, and perfectly unconscious of the carnage and death by which he is everywhere surrounded. The contour of his face and the expression of his countenance exhibit that cool judgement, calm thoughtfulness and quiet dignity which marks his career as a soldier and gentleman. The arduous duties he has performed, which his large cavalry command devolve upon him, have only strengthened his energy and endurance. His soldiers have learned to love and admire in him all those noble traits, which as the distinguished author of *Charles XII.* says, "stamp him as the steel-clad warrior, with the heart of the patriot and sympathizing man beating in every action."

His entire career as an officer in our army clearly shows that he did not buckle on his sword and go forth to seek merely "the bubble reputation at the cannon's mouth," but from an honest and earnest desire to give his life and energies to the cause of human liberty, the rights and principles of his country, bought and bequeathed to us by the patriots of '76. He is no aspirant for either political, military or social honors. The rich laurels which now cluster about his brow, were not placed there because he had the popular favor, and succeeded in "beating his name on the drum of the world's ear," but were wreathed there by the President, because in him he saw the accomplished soldier and the unflinching and devoted patriot.

In scientific and literary attainments, Gen. Wheeler stands among the most learned men of our country. In military information he is most thoroughly read. His system of *CAVALRY TACTICS* is pronounced by cavalry officers to be the most complete and perfect work yet published. His leisure moments are spent in the study of his profession. A work he is now preparing, showing the part taken

by cavalry in many of the great battles of the world, shows great research and profound knowledge.

The habits and moral character of Gen. Wheeler are of the most circumspect and high-toned nature. None of the vices of intemperance, or other bad habits common in the country, have been able to allure him from the spotless rectitude which has distinguished him from his earliest childhood. Where sobriety, accomplished manners and highly cultivated morals are admired, in every particular, this YOUNG GENERAL is a beautiful model, *sans reproche* !



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